

Tornado rips through Oakura campsite

The path of the tornado

On Wednesday 8 February between 3 am and 4 am in the morning a tornado swept in from the sea to bludgeon the local campsite.

The raging whirly first struck a tent (belonging to local family Craig and Lynette Meads) pitched on sea front, carrying it 20 metres before dropping it on top of caravan diagonally opposite.

The winds ripped a fully grown Puka from it's root base directly behind, then picked up a leisure-built caravan (first site on top level), turning it on its side. The caravan beside, also leisure-built, was also picked up and thrown against a lamp post. The next caravan in the row had a large window smashed when a barbecue sitting beside it was thrown up.

The tornado moved over the cliff to the upper campsite on Jans Terrace, where it ripped branches off pohutukawa and removed the roof from the ablution block. It headed down to the bottom campsites, taking down full sized karakas and pine trees on the Shearer sub-division, before doubling back on itself, this time tipping the caravan belonging to campground managers, Jan



and Al (who had chosen the spot specifically to protect it from wind and sea salt!).

It finally ran out of force in the Waimoku stream just behind the Raw Tasman.

A firsthand experience

Christine and Kevin Turnbull were woken by a loud noise (which they soon discovered was the tent landing on their caravan!) and the roaring wind. It almost sounded as though the waves were rushing over the sand bank towards them. Their caravan was lifted from the ground by the force of the winds, curtains flapping wildly through the open windows, before it was set down just out of place with, amazingly, no major damage.



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FROM THE TOM ZONE

First up we've had yet another display of Mother Nature showing just who is in control as a tornado ripped through the Oakura campsite. Luckily no one was injured – of the six sites that were in its path only one was occupied and it escaped with minor dents, its gazebo destroyed and a tent on top of it. You tell me, how lucky is that when the photos show the extensive damage to the other dwellings!

We interviewed four intrepid locals who took on nature and competed in the Coast to Coast – They share their experiences with us on pages 18 and 19.

We keep saying it and I guess we'll keep on... Thanks for the stories and the titbits – you're helping create our own piece of history. TOM truly is a community effort. Thanks to all of you for the positive feedback, it really does keep us going.

Have a great month

Tracey



from **MAYOR PETE**

NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL
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Hi folks!

Huge congratulations are due to the Old Boys' Surf Lifesaving Club for the wonderful job they have done over summer! This summer has not been without its challenges, and your presence and professionalism is so reassuring – you're legends!

We've had summertime events aplenty, and with the New Zealand Surf Lifesaving Championships on 17–19 March the focus will remain on Oakura and its surrounds.

Meanwhile, a number of big projects are continuing to be developed for the town.

Great progress is being made on installing reticulated sewerage for Oakura and connecting it to the New Plymouth Wastewater Treatment Plant. I'm really glad to see this project going forward for the benefit of the Oakura community. It's also great to see that the current plan minimises the need for the network to cross private property – a lot of work has gone into designing a network that is effective both cost-wise and operationally. We're aiming to have the network ready for connection by the end of next year, bringing with it significant environmental benefits for one of our most desirable locations in North Taranaki.

With the Coastal Strategy and the Oakura Structure Plan getting nearer to being finalised, we're now drilling down to the details. Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to attend community meetings, read up on the draft plans and send in their comments – your input has been invaluable as we prepare these plans so that they reflect what the community wants.

In the meantime the Council is continuing to work with Transit New Zealand on the design for the main street. It's fair to say it's been incredibly frustrating! The streetscape needs a tidy up, and it's critical that the safety of pedestrians remain a priority! I am less concerned about delays for traffic than I am for safety of the residents and visitors to the village. I am still confident, however, that we will get common sense to prevail.

Remember: if you have any ideas for projects or potential improvements in the district, be sure to give me a call on 759 6060!

Peter Tennent

Mayor

tom

TOM is a free, monthly publication, delivered on the second Wednesday of the month to all homes and post-boxes from the city limits to Dover Road.

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HON. HARRY DUYNHOVEN
MP for New Plymouth

Of knockers and mockers...

The holiday season is pretty well over. Our children are back at school and most of us are digging in for another working year. The knockers and mockers are hard at work too...

Reality check: The National Bank's latest regional survey shows Taranaki is experiencing an economic growth rate of 3.7%, had the largest increase in accommodation occupancy rates, second-highest business confidence in the country and consumer confidence exceeding the national figures.

The nation's economy is in pretty good shape. We're not only doing better than the OECD but also better than our three main trading partners – the US, Japan and Australia. Our GDP grew 40% more than Australia's.

Yet "We're doomed, doomed" wail the knockers, who continue to compare us to our detriment to our neighbours across the ditch. The knockers' claims that we are facing recession just aren't believable. What we face is a cyclical slowdown and we're in good shape to manage our way through it.

I know it's "the Economy, Stupid," (with usual apologies, this time to Bill Clinton's James Carville) and, of course, it's hugely important. It's just that there are so many other things we should take pride in, too. We should celebrate our sporting and cultural successes, our creativity, our unique heritage, our lifestyles and environment and our ability to live mostly at peace with each other in our multicultural society.

Why do some people have to knock or mock everything?

I've been thinking about that lately, and about free speech and a free press. There are quotes galore – here's the one from Voltaire, "I do not agree with what you have to say but I'll defend to the death your right to say it." That lies right at the heart of our belief in freedom. The thing is, when we say that these days, we don't actually expect to have to lay our own precious lives down.

Here's another truism: "There's no such thing as a free lunch," and, I have to ask, ought we not to consider the cost to ourselves and to others before knocking or mocking (or publishing badly drawn, racist cartoons)?

Ex-MP, ex-Mayor, now-talk-back host, John Banks provided the latest example of this with his allegation that Robert Hewitt is a hoaxer not a hero. Most New Zealanders were amazed, moved and proud of Robert Hewitt's courage, strength and love for family and friends, when he was found alive, and of the determination, loyalty and comradeship of his rescuers. We should celebrate these people, we need heroes to admire. We should believe: If they can, perhaps we can.

Yes, in New Zealand, John is free to say what he likes. But, at what price, comes freedom? And who paid?

As Sir Winston Churchill once said, "Some people's idea of [free speech] is that they are free to say what they like, but if anyone says anything back, that is an outrage."

We're on a journey. We're developing our own New Zealand way of doing things – of growing a strong economy, improving our health, education, security and living standards, and we're building a nation from an increasingly diverse population.

The Government believes in New Zealand and New Zealanders. We believe in our nation's potential and we are doing what we can to ensure New Zealand succeeds. What do knockers and mockers believe in?

Shane Herbert - Lawyer

Civil Litigation

7599119



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KAITAKE COMMUNITY BOARD

The Board held a meeting in early February at the Surf Club. Surf gazing has become a must now with all the talk of sharks and indeed a large fin was spotted by Linda McBreen heading north. More large fins were seen and it became obvious that a pod of Orcas were enjoying our coastline. Congratulations to all those looking out for others in our ocean, but don't let's forget fish live there too! The surf and beach have never looked better and it's hard to keep out of the water, nevertheless we must keep safe.

The Board welcomed Linda McBreen with her excellent proposal for an extension of the children's playground. Linda had prepared a very informative and creative proposal, which we have recommended to the Council for inclusion in the 2006 LTCCP.

Our business also included an update on the progress of the CBD upgrade. We will be having an onsite meeting with Transit at last, as soon as it can be arranged – watch this space.

The sewerage plan will now be a hot topic locally, with 40 residents receiving letters informing them of the plans to go through private property and asking for their comments. By the time you read this we will have held a public meeting in the Oakura Hall to allow residents to discuss the plans with Council staff.

We have extended an invitation to Telecom to attend the next Board meeting to explain the lack of Broadband connections plus the unavailability of new phone connections to our community. We deserve the same level of service as others enjoy but presently many are unable to connect, as is the case with those living in Koru Road, while only a few enjoy the benefit of fast connections (albeit getting slower every day).

Bridge jumping by kids is an issue again – not so much the jumping but the danger traffic poses to the children when they walk across the narrow bridge and crowd against the barriers. It's stupid and senseless. Tree jumping in the river is another problem. The bank is enjoyed by many youngsters, as it should be. However, some have destroyed the lower trees by swinging off them and have now moved up to the only tree still sitting above the diving hole. How long the tree will last and what will happen when it finally gives in is anybody's guess. With the numbers we have seen enjoying the river this summer, jumping from the bank has become hazardous to the younger ones. Already there have been accidents and it's my hope that parents will ban their kids from the tree.

Many will be looking forward to the Old Boys' Surf Club reunion at Easter. There are some great memories to chew over, especially for people my age – they were the days of Saturday night dances in the Oakura Hall over summer. Cant wait!

Remember you are welcome at the Board meetings to talk with us over issues or ideas you might have.

Cheers

Fay Looney

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Neighbourhood "justice"

Passing over my desk on a regular basis are comments, opinions, grievances and bursts of real anger over someone or some organisation. It can usually be resolved by one means or another, but there are exceptions and one of these areas is "justice" (or what it is perceived to be). The anger, usually felt by the victim or their friends, is directed at the justice, or lack of, handed out by the Courts.

Many of the comments are directed at who gets sentenced to what and who does not: a recent All Black gets off with only bruised knuckles after assaulting a fan in the street; a young bloke does a load of damage, including wrecking a car, daddy pays the fine, he walks. The list of messages is long and convincing, and in the public eye this is not justice.

Many ask what has happened to the once revered and cherished independence of the judiciary, now being overtaken by political expediency – the ghostly hands of many political figures can be seen at the judicial tiller.

What angers many is the ever growing list of non-custodial options: home detention, community service, restorative justice, etc. All of these are regarded by the majority of the public to be "soft" options, but is that all they are? It appears that these soft options are more finance driven than ever – the prisons are all overflowing, so where can they put offenders?

The answer seems to be back in the public arena under any name, regardless of the consequences. This is a similar situation and attitude to that which prevails in the treatment of the mentally ill and it now seems to be becoming the norm with criminals.

Of the many suggested solutions, a couple are worth a mention. The first suggestion reverts back to fixed penalty for offences. For example, for burglary the sentence would be six months for the first offence, two years for a second offence and so on. The penalties are determined by a panel with a cross section of the public involved and the penalty imposed is what the offender serves, with no bail and no parole. A straight, clean system that cannot be messed about by anyone.

The second suggestion, which I personally like, is that the victim of the crime should be in court at all times, especially at the time the sentence is handed down. It is believed this might influence the judge to consider the position of the victim and their circumstances, rather than just address the offender and their circumstances.

But there are many opinions and options – if you want yours to count speak up, have ago at your local MP (they are paid to get a hard time!).

All these people are someone's neighbour, victim and offender alike, some you invite to the barbie, others you miss out. Some you simply do not know who or what they are, and sometimes it's better not to know.

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A Slow Food blueberry picnic

After negotiating a very long, narrow and beautifully tree-lined driveway, we arrived at The Blueberry Patch at 5.30 pm one evening in mid-February for a Slow Food picnic. The Patch is in a very sheltered site with views looking out over the Okato countryside towards the sea. Some eager folk were already picking away merrily, conversing with fellow pickers about which were the best bushes and discussing what they were going to do with their berries once they got home.

When we all had our containers full, a total of 23 Slow Foodies settled down on rugs near the blueberry bushes and extracted a variety of picnic delights from our baskets. Along with a glass or two of wine, we sat back and enjoyed stimulating company and carefully prepared picnics – such a fine array of foods! It was just so relaxing...

While we were enjoying the perfectly calm warm evening sitting on our picnic rugs, we decided to share with each other why we wanted to become involved with Slow Food and also divulge a little about ourselves. We discovered we're a like-minded group who all seriously wish to support Slow Food in Taranaki.

After such an enjoyable and successful occasion, we feel strongly encouraged to arrange future events as the picnic was so easy, stress free and well supported.

Johanne Cuthbert

Note:

The Blue Berry Patch can be found at 341 Upper Pitone Road, Okato. If you'd like more information about the Slow Food movement in Taranaki, see the *Slow Food Newsletter* on page 16.

Future looking good for Oakura streetscape

A revamp of Oakura's central streetscape is looking more certain following a meeting in the town recently.

Transit New Zealand's Regional Manager (Wanganui), Errol Christiansen, met with members of the Kaitake Community Board and Oakura community consultation group, Councillor Heather Dodunski and New Plymouth District Council staff to discuss what the community wants for the town and what Transit NZ requires from a state highway.

NPDC Manager Projects Jeff Bondy says the meeting ended with all parties coming close to finding a solution.

"Everyone has a clearer idea of what the other party requires, and I think we've come to a point where a workable solution is within reach," says Mr Bondy. "Our designer is now working up another version of the streetscape, which will be considered by the Council, Transit and the Community Board. Hopefully this one will be able to be signed off by everyone."

Mr Christiansen says Transit still wants the community to get what it can from the upgraded streetscape.

"We're reviewing the way we can apply our standards for the best utilisation of the space available along that road. I'm confident we can get to a solution that everyone is satisfied with," says Mr Christiansen.

Mr Bondy says the aim of the streetscape is to maximise the space available to pedestrians and give a casual beach feel to the town's central area. The design would also slow traffic through the town.

Meanwhile Transit NZ wants to ensure there is enough road space to handle increasing volumes of traffic along the state highway in coming years.




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Letters to the Editor

Hi

After being seized by a mighty wave of enthusiasm at reading your article "Slow Food and Slow Towns" in November, I was sidetracked by trips to other worthy causes in other parts of the country (babies, 65th birthdays, weddings) and have neglected to give you any feedback.

This is a brilliant concept! I'm sure I don't need to convince you so I'm not going to wax eloquent, but I just want to register my support for the idea and offer my energy/talents to the project.

Food, the appreciation of food and the social aspects of food are extremely important to my husband and I, and we've travelled far and wide in appreciation of food and the cultures it's embedded in. Now home, we have often lamented that we don't follow the Spanish/Italian traditions of leisurely food, friends and family focussed meals on a daily basis. On the other hand, being away does help crystallise the aspects of home that really are Kiwi.

The accelerating over-development of our unspoilt coasts and our unpretentious bach culture is also real cause for alarm and the Slow Town movement is a move toward the right values. And people in Oakura really value our place, lifestyle and the natural charms of our coast. Perfect for Slow Town purposes.

What feedback have you received from other locals? Is there any plan of action or meeting planned?

Regards

Maryanne

Dear Residents of Oakura

On behalf of Butlers Bar & Café, I would like to thank you for your tolerance during our Summer Outdoor Concert Series. We apologise for the timing of the *Exponents'* 20th Anniversary concert being held so late in January. We endeavour to stage these shows during Christmas and New Year, but due to the band's touring commitments, this was not possible.

The feedback we have received is always very positive, and with over 1000 people per show, there have been no problems in the three years we have been staging them, making Oakura a "desination".

Having a venue to cope with these volumes of people has been our aim and having a diverse business such as Butlers is, with dining, functions, weddings and concerts, always to a high standard we hope must have a positive flow-on effect for all.

Once again, thank you Oakura.

Gavin, Linda and the staff at Butlers



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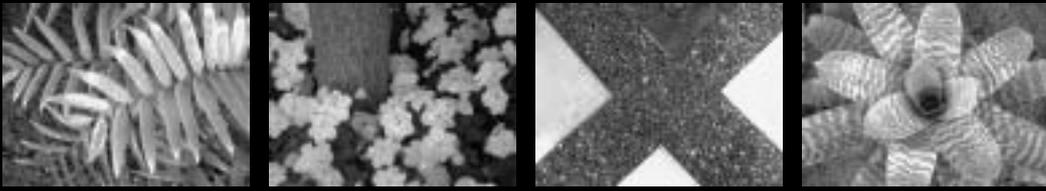
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Oakura Structure Plan Consultation - (ROUND TWO)

On Monday 20th February the NPDC met with Oakura locals to discuss the concept document that had been developed from the input of the last discussion evening held late last year. About 40 locals turned out to see what the NPDC had done with their ideas and issues. The key issues the NPDC had identified and were up for discussion were:

- Residential development will be directed to the south of existing residential activity. There is an opportunity to reduce the housing density within Oakura or keep it at the same level.
- The views and character of the areas around the mountain and sea will be retained. The coastal area overlay and the inland area overlay, included in the document, may lead to controls on the height, bulk, colour and materials used in developments in these areas to ensure they fit into the landscape character.
- Indicative roads have been identified throughout the future residential areas in order to improve connectivity for vehicles and pedestrians and integrate the new area with the existing community.
- The commercial area should stay in its current location, on the landward side of the state highway, while incorporating a few small businesses near the beach.

- There is a desire to retain and develop recreational opportunities and beach front access. Alternative recreational and community facility areas are discussed in the concept document to meet future demand.
- Preserve and develop pathways throughout the structure plan area. Existing and future pathways are indicated on the map and include areas along the coast, along the Oakura River and within future residential areas. The existing and potential reserves, esplanade strips and protected open spaces have also been indicated.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy to effectively manage coastal erosion from Ahu Ahu Rd to Oakura River. The three erosion management options are allowing retreat, modification of the beach or seawall construction. The implications of each option are discussed, and erosion management areas and an escarpment enhancement area are indicated in the concept document.

A draft map with a 20 year structure plan was also presented. The gathering broke into groups and discussed the draft and then gave a synopsis of their discussion. There was overwhelming support for keeping section sizes to 700sq metres and feedback suggested that the residential zoning south of the village with public walkways and roading links were important. There was support for the controlled building zones but some thought common sense could be applied. The motor camp was important in its current location and erosion needed a sensible solution. One important consideration was raised that hadn't been aired before and that was schooling. If an increased area is designated as residential then how will the school support that increase – already being at capacity with zoning in place?

Priorisation of ideas is the next stage then the Council will notify the public again in May when submissions can be heard.

By Kim Ferens

Jones & Sandford

MITRE 10 Gardening

Gardening with Rosemary Herb

MARCH CHECKLIST

✦ Vegetables:

This month is an important time to be planting winter seedlings of beetroot, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, spinach and silverbeet, but do watch out for white butterflies.

✦ Flowers:

It's bulb time already! Plant daffodils, tulips, ranunculas, anemones, grape hyacinths, irises, freesias, crocuses, etc.

Cut back, lift and divide perennials.

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MUSIC REVIEW by DON JUAN

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Various
(Discmedi-Blau/Elite)

When the *crème de la crème* of Cuba's singers and musicians gathered to pay homage to the works of Joan Manuel Serrat, music lovers in the non-Hispanic world probably asked why? And then, perhaps as an afterthought, who's she?

Some background then! Serrat, who was born in a working-class suburb of Barcelona in late-December 1943, deeply touches the hearts of Spanish speakers and could be viewed as the Catalan equivalent of Bob Dylan ("she" is actually a he). He is the man who is credited with writing Spain's best song, "Mediterráneo" (heard here in a moody, instrumental version by Frank Fernández – which, stripped of its lyrics, Spaniards may well regard as musical heresy). Serrat was the first artist to sing in Catalan on Spanish television. He has been a songwriter, exile, rebel and poet and, along with such revered artists as Jacques Brel and Leonard Cohen, Serrat has been honoured with the prestigious Luigio Ienco Award.

Of course, not speaking Catalan or any other Spanish tongue, my understanding of these songs is non-existent, but the melodies are strong and the performances are uniformly superb. And, let's face it, any artist whose songs could entice the likes of Buena Vista stars Omara Portuondo and Ibrahim Ferrer, piano virtuoso Chucho Valdés, *nueva trova* giants Pablo Milanés and Silvio Rodríguez and cha-cha-cha originators Orquesta Aragón must be the real deal! The Serrat songs/pieces interpreted by these venerated artists are, naturally, superb, but *Cuba Le Canta A Serrat* also delivers some marvellous surprises courtesy of its less acclaimed acts. These include the veteran harmony group Trio Taicuba with a gorgeous "Cantares", the wistful version of "Tu Nombre Me Sabe a Yerba" by Fifties 'throwback' Leyanis López, exciting new vocal star Vania with veteran *conguero* Tata

Güines savaging "Toca Madera" and Bamboleo's tasty reading of "Penélope".

Cuba Le Canta A Serrat is also a beautiful package (although, sadly, some of the Spanish to English translations are unintentionally humorous), containing one conventional audio disc and a 'dual disc', which features another full audio CD on one side and a documentary DVD on the other. Full of musical gems, Joan Manuel Serrat must be delighted with this tribute to his body of work.

Concrete Jungle: The Music Of Bob Marley

Monty Alexander – (Telarc/Elite)

Veteran Jamaican jazz pianist (and sometime melodica player) Monty Alexander is no stranger to his homeland's most popular export, having worked as a session musician at Federal Studios alongside other reggae pioneers like Ernest Ranglin, Roland Alphonso, Don Drummond and Dizzy Moore. Alexander also backed Joe Higgs, early mentor and vocal coach to The Wailers, but the connection did not end there, he recorded another Marley tribute album, *Stir It Up*, back in 1999.

What I enjoy about this album (and the piano master's other Jamaican-Jazz 'crossover' recordings) is that Alexander is not afraid to try something different. For example, the *mento* band on "Three Little Birds" is a deft touch. The trombone mastery of Delfeayo Marsalis (notably on "No More Trouble" and "Crazy Baldheads") would have prompted a wry smile, even from the tormented great Don Drummond, and 'Jah Bob' himself would surely have enjoyed these cheeky reworkings of his songs. "Selam", a pensive original for solo piano, ends *Concrete Jungle* like a whispered, heartfelt prayer.

Tornado in the campsite

(continued from page 1)



New ventilation system?.



Hookers to the rescue!

Oh! The fresh air . . . the fun!

Whoops!



Inside, the cabin looks like a teenage boy's bedroom.

Kevin attempted to go outside to check on his gazebo, which he had forgotten to bring in the night before, only to find he couldn't get out – the tent had blocked their doorway. Once the winds had dropped and calmness had been restored the couple made their way out, with torches in hand, to survey the damage.

Next

Al, Jan and Shelly from the camp were called as it was unknown whether the affected sites were occupied – other than the Turnbolls, thankfully not! Al contacted the affected

owners and, as it became light, assessed the damage and took photos.

In the morning Al contacted Jimmy Priest from Hookers and within the hour a hi-ab was on the job, righting the caravans. Al can't say enough about how great they were.

Damage

Most of the caravans and leisure-built facilities have been written off to the estimated cost of \$50,000 – the interiors all looked like the inside of a washing machine!

Fortunately, nobody was hurt.

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If you know of anyone locally, who would like an old silage pit or oxidation pond filled in, please let Alison or Peter know, as this would help keep down the cost of of the service.

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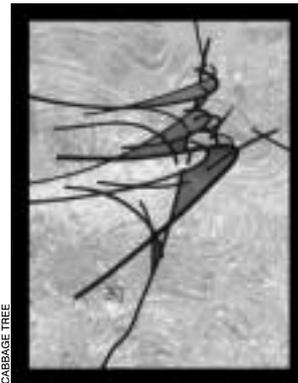
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Everyone who purchased a bottle of Queen Adelaide or Rosemount wine during January, was put in the draw to win the barbeque.

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Another great summer - *Best Weather!*

Started off with *Midge Marsden, Bullfrog Rata* and the *Handsome Giants*. Not a big crowd, but great blues and atmosphere.

Then *The Feelers* with *Ewan Gilmour*. Ewan had the crowd laughing with his own brand of humour. *The Feelers*, NZ's top band, polished and professional, put on another great show with 1200 people in attendance.

Followed two nights later by *Deja Voodoo, Steriogram* and *ELMNOP*, it was their last night on tour and they let their hair down at the end of the night with the stage full of muso's and punters alike - a bouncer's nightmare.

The Exponents hit the stage with *D4* as support. The sound checks louder than the real thing, but another good night with all the hits. *Jordan Luck* in great form, the band tight and the night running close to the wire, with the man from *Armourguard* (Noise Abatement Officer) not having a great night!

Overall, a successful concert series with Butlers providing once again the venue, the organisation, the team - all working well to put Oakura on the map as a place to be.

NB - Roadies love Butlers' food and always comment that they get the best meals of the tour here. Great taste and plenty of it!

Gavin Knudson - Butlers

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This month, TOM brings you the second article in an ongoing series of Taranaki Electricity Trust (TET) funded 'Taranaki Stories' from Puke Ariki. The aim of these stories is to bring to life the spirits of Taranaki; to provide meaning to street signs, local spots and landmarks, and names from the past.

The legend of the Battle of Waireka

PART ONE (By Sorrel Hoskin)

Standing on the hillside at Kaipopo Pā, overlooking the green, tree-studded paddocks of the Waireka (meaning "sweet water") plains toward Paritutu, it's difficult to imagine anything but a peaceful scene. But over 140 years ago these plains echoed to the sound of gunfire as the first battle of the Taranaki Land Wars raged around the gurgling Waireka stream.

The lead up to the battle

Te Atiawa had been driven off their land after the Waikato invasion in 1831. But now they had returned – much to the angst of the local settlers, who wanted the fertile land for farms.

Governor Browne pushed ahead with the purchase of the Waitara block, despite the objection of Te Atiawa chief Wiremu Kingi and the majority of the iwi. In February 1860 the Governor ordered surveyors to peg out the block. Wiremu Kingi resisted, his iwi "...angrily pulling out survey pegs as fast as they were placed".

Governor Browne declared martial law, gathering a bevy of men from the 65th Regiment, Marines and Blue Jackets, and calling in local men of military age between 15 and 55 years. These last formed a new regiment known as the Taranaki Rifle Volunteers and Militia. Between them, they numbered 1200 men.

Te Atiawa, concerned that they would be outnumbered by the Europeans, called in support from South Taranaki.

Waitara Camp was set up by the military and Te Atiawa were driven off the fertile plains. They withdrew to the edge of the disputed area and built a fighting pā, Te Kohia, just inside the boundary – a challenge to the Europeans.

On 17 March 1860 the opening shots of the Taranaki War were fired at Te Kohia. The next day the Pā was stormed, but found empty. New Plymouth became a settlement besieged. Both Māori and European farms along the coast were ravaged and burned.

A fighting pā

Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui and Nga Rauru tribes moved toward New Plymouth in support of Te Atiawa. They gathered at Omata, ten kilometres south of New Plymouth, and built another pā, Kaipopo. It was a hodgepodge structure, built of fence posts, railings and saplings, surrounded by rifle pits. It stood on Ratanui, overlooking the two arms of the Waireka Stream on the plain below, with views of Paritutu and New Plymouth in the north and the coast to the south.



Waireka today.

A Tapu Reverend

Omata settlers abandoned their farms and rushed for the safety of New Plymouth. But not everyone left. The congregating chiefs had declared the farms of Reverends Brown and Gilbert tapu, protecting them. Surrounding settler families who were French and Portuguese were also safe – the war "was only with the British."

The settlers were given white scarves to wear and paraded in front of lines of warriors – it was made clear there were to be no mistaken killings of the protected families. A sign, written in Māori and declaring their neutral status, was erected at the end of the road.

The settlers were told to stay in Reverend Brown's house and not to leave.

Murder

On 27 March, five settlers, including two boys, were shot and brutally slain near Omata. When the bodies were discovered the next day New Plymouth erupted in panic. The settlement was in danger! The big guns on Marsland Hill were fired, and, like chicks gathering to a mother hen, everyone within a two-mile radius rushed for the safety of the town. Reverend Gilbert described the scene in his diary:

"In the town everyone was in a state of nervous tension. Women crying and

ringing their hands, children screaming and clinging in fear to their mothers, men running to and fro, the militia and volunteers already in ranks ready to leave. People outside their homes pale, breathless and trembling with anxiety."

(End of part one, story continues next month)



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The Adventures of
KOREAN KELLY

What is wrong with people? I just finished reading a Korean newspaper that highlighted the massive financial problems involved with educating children in Korea and then read an article in a New Zealand online newspaper stating that a school in Wellington was offering financial incentives to students to keep them in school instead of roaming the streets. The common factor here was the outrage of parents. I will have to admit that I'm entirely flabbergasted.

The cost of education here is ridiculous. It was recently shown that the average four-person household spends almost NZ\$3000 per month to educate their children. They then have to pay about \$500 to buy a school uniform, which in most cases must be new – anything secondhand here is looked down upon as a symbol of poverty. Failure to buy these uniforms and outfitting the children in old or used uniforms results in extreme bullying by wealthier children. This struck me as weird... I remember campaigning at school for mufti for seventh formers and being told by the teachers that one reason we all wear uniforms is to remove any financial inequalities that may be evident if we wore street clothes. It seems like this doesn't apply over here...

Then in New Zealand, some irate parents moaned that students would receive \$50 if they didn't miss a day of school, even saying they would pay \$50 less of the school fees every year so as to not support such a ridiculous scheme. Is it just me, or is education important...

In Korea, parents work six days a week to send their children to private teaching academies everyday. Children attend school six days a week and truancy is very rare because of the importance of education in Confucian tradition. Parents have a very active role in their children's education, with the teaching academy teachers calling all the parents weekly and ensuring that the child is achieving to a good standard. Let me reiterate – parents will work 60 to 70 hours a week to give any advantages to their children in this highly competitive country. Yet in New Zealand, we complain if a school decides to try something different to make kids want to come to school. I even think one of the parents said something about teachers needing to be more interesting. I'm sorry but when will Kiwis realise how lucky we all are.

We have a good education system. We don't have to spend half of our household earnings just making sure our children get educated well. Children don't have to go to school for 10-12 hours a day and fall asleep in class. Kiwi kids can spend Saturdays playing sport or hanging out with friends. I think perspective is a wonderful thing. Before parents blatantly attack a system for implementing new ideas and focusing on the negatives, why not think about all the positives that could come from such a scheme. The worst thing that could happen is you would have to spend \$4 extra a month for your children's future... a little better than \$3000, right?

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 Kelly Ryan



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SLOW FOOD

TARANAKI

NEWSLETTER No 1.

FEBRUARY 2006

We're delighted to announce SLOW FOOD TARANAKI is now official! Documents have been received from Italy to confirm the Taranaki convivium has been officially registered with Slow Food International and we are pleased to have you join with us as we start this wonderful journey.

We have a founding group of enthusiasts who have formed a 'committee', Johanne Cuthbert, Nelle Rose, Kate Roberts and Tony Waghorn and we meet regularly to organise social occasions and events. From previous Slow Food events we've held in Taranaki, we have a list of approx 100 people who have expressed an interest in Slow Food. We think this response is amazing! All these people will be notified of forthcoming events either by email or phone.

What can be better than having a group of like minded people enjoying good foods and wines, rediscovering the flavours of times gone by, educating ourselves, sharing culture - all of which lead to the development of true friendships. It's also all about having fun in a calm, slow and stress-free way - if it involves stress then we won't be doing it! There are many exciting seasonal foods to celebrate and we've plenty of ideas of events we would like to hold here in Taranaki e.g. Blueberry Picking Picnic, Tomato & Basil Feast, 'A Taste of My Childhood' Theme Pot Luck Dinner, 'Cheese-making At Home' Workshop, Heritage Seeds Evening, Foodie Film Evenings, etc. Maybe we can also arrange groups to visit Farmers Markets in other areas - the list is endless but you may have ideas of your own you would like to share with us so please feel free to do so.

INFORMATION RE SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT

Why was the Slow Food Movement Formed?

Slow Food International was founded in 1986 in Italy as a response to the effects of fast food and frantic pace of the 'fast life'. There are now 700 Slow Food convivia in over 50 countries involving some 80,000 people.

What does it do?

Slow Food links ethics and pleasure. It celebrates differences in flavours, ancient food production and small-scale agriculture. Slow Food restores cultural dignity to food, promotes taste education and strives to defend biodiversity. Saving an endangered animal breed or vegetable variety means preserving an environment, recovering recipes and rewarding the discerning palate. Through education, events, workshops and publications Slow Food International hopes to build a slower, kinder and more thoughtful environment within our homes, markets and communities.

Peta Mathias has just published a book entitled 'A Cook's Tour of New Zealand' and in this she's written an interesting article on Slow Food. Peta is a very enthusiastic member of the Slow Food Movement as you may have gathered from her TV programmes. Rick Stein is another strong advocate for the Slow Food.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tomato and Basil Feast

This yummy event is being planned for March - we'll let you know more details as soon as possible.

ALSO, DID YOU KNOW?

There's a *Sustainable Living Community Course* being held at WITT from 7-9pm each Weds from 22 Feb-19 Apr.

PS: *Have you ever tried the Spanish Hot Chocolate at The Yellow Café? A true taste experience!*

So that's it for our first newsletter. If you have anything you would like included in future newsletters, please email johanne.cuthbert@paradise.net.nz

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Health Issues

from Oakura Pharmacy

Focus on diabetes at Oakura Pharmacy

Oakura Pharmacy now has some additional services for diabetic patients including checking and cleaning blood glucose meters, free batteries for the meters, downloading information from the meter and interpreting that data to help with diabetes management. Colleen is also able to offer blood glucose testing, blood pressure checks and weight management consultations, and supply Xenical capsules to assist weight loss.

Colleen and Catherine, the pharmacists at Oakura Pharmacy, say that diabetes is on the increase in New Zealand. Our lifestyles have a great deal to do with it, particularly our eating habits and sedentary lifestyles. We are eating more refined foods with high fat, sugar and salt contents. Our busy lifestyles encourage us to grab takeaways and 'junk' foods that are usually high in these things. Combined with our lower levels of physical activity, weight problems and obesity are the result. Obesity is a significant risk factor in the development of diabetes, and other diseases like cardiovascular disease (heart attack, stroke and angina).

Our bodies need glucose for energy. An organ called the pancreas produces the hormone insulin that makes glucose from the food we eat available for our bodies to use. With diabetes, problems occur with insulin production or with the way insulin works, and the glucose is not available for use. Blood glucose levels rise above normal and diabetes develops in one of two forms.

With Type 1 diabetes – which occurs mainly in younger people – the pancreas stops producing insulin, usually following an illness, e.g. viral flu. Type 1 diabetics need insulin injections for life.

Type 2 diabetes is the more common. It tends to occur in people over 40 years although, increasingly, younger people are developing this disease because of the greater incidence of increased weight and obesity. While the pancreas still can produce some insulin, it is not enough and often what is produced cannot be used because the body is resistant to the effects of insulin.

Type 2 diabetes is hereditary so if you have family members with it, you need to be very careful with your health and fitness to delay onset of the disease. Because you don't actually feel any symptoms from diabetes even while it is doing the damage (it really is the "Silent Disease"), if you have the risk factors (a family history of Type 2 diabetes, you're overweight, have high blood pressure and/or high cholesterol levels) it is best to have a general medical check-up at about the age of 40 for Europeans or 30 for Maori and people of Pacific, Asian and Middle Eastern origins). If left untreated, Type 2 diabetes will cause permanent damage to your blood vessels, eyesight, kidneys, feet and heart.

"The main focus for managing Type 2 diabetes is on a healthy diet, getting plenty of physical exercise and losing weight if you are overweight," says Colleen. "A healthy

diet is one with plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables and whole grain breads and cereals; eating low-fat dairy products; having little animal fat, fried fatty foods; sweet, processed items and foods high in salt," recommends Catherine. "Great advice for the whole family and a great way to educate our children from an early age to avoid problems later in life."

They also advise that around 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity – brisk walking, climbing the stairs at work, mowing the lawns – is important for weight management and good diabetes control. Even if you have been prescribed medicines, you must still control your weight and have a healthy eating pattern and plenty of physical activity.

The medicines help the pancreas to make more insulin, and help the body use that insulin. Oakura Pharmacy also stocks complimentary medicines such as Glucose Manager and Cholesterol Manager to help in the management of these conditions. However, over time some Type 2 diabetics need insulin injections as the medicines stop being effective.

The Self Care fact card on Type 2 diabetes has more information. "Because diabetes is linked with high cholesterol, high blood pressure and obesity, leading to cardiovascular disease, ask us for other useful fact cards such as Reducing Your Cholesterol, High Blood Pressure and Weight Loss," suggests Colleen. "Our goal is to assist diabetics to understand how best to manage their conditions, get good blood glucose control and enjoy life."

As well as these services for diabetics we can also supply the Emergency Contraceptive Pill (requires consultation) and medicine information printouts for all prescription medicines, and we deliver free in the village and can courier any requirements down the Coast. Our vitamins and supplement section is expanding all the time, along with Sports nutrition products for all those "in training" to gain an advantage. Why not get your doctor's surgery to fax through your prescription to us on [fax number] and it can be ready and waiting for you to pick up, or we can deliver.

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Speed demon Dylan

Omata School 12-year-old Dylan Deane came a step closer to realising a dream last month when he was runner up in the under-16 solo speedway championship competition in Whangarei. He was just one point off first place, so it's sure to be only a matter of time before he achieves a first.

Dylan dreams of becoming rich and famous (like Ivan Mauger) for his speedway racing skills and of competing in the United Kingdom. And this plucky school boy might just achieve it – you can feel his passion for the sport.

Last month Dylan was talent spotted by the 'great' Ivan Mauger when he was racing at Rosebank, Auckland. Through this selection Dylan attended the Ivan Mauger Racing School, where he learnt many skills to improve his racing. The school is open to 12 children and everything (gear, accommodation, food, etc) is provided for the kids.

Dylan began competing in speedway three years ago when he was nine and his bikes bear that number. He began riding motorbikes on a Peewee 50 when he was five and now races a Honda replica with a Jara frame powered by a 200cc motor. He is hoping to get permission to race the 500cc version soon. You'd have to say he's plucky because these bikes have no gears, no brakes and reach speeds of 200 kilometres an hour.

So far Dylan has been injury free and lives by the motto, "If I fall off, I'm not going fast enough"! He adores speed and has no fear (you'd certainly not want to be a scaredy cat as you hurtle towards a brick wall!), good balance and reflexes, says mum Lisa. But it is dad Noel Hancock who ferries Dylan around the country. It is back to Auckland shortly before heading to Christchurch in March.

The family has been proactive in obtaining sponsorship from various local and national businesses and the speedway fraternity is very obliging when it comes to helping each other out with gear and advice, and Dylan has made many new friends. Watch this space for the next Ivan Mauger!

By Kim Ferens



Oakura produces more top athletes

A whole raft (literally!) of Oakurites paddled (figuratively!) off to the 2006 Speights Coast to Coast endurance event in the South Island recently. Murray and Jenny Laird, Dave Rielly and Brenda Crummey all pitted their bodies against the elements to achieve the coveted title of 'finisher'.

This was **Dave's** second Coast to Coast competition and the first time he had competed as an individual in the two-day event. Last year he competed in the team event with Craig Scott and he thought it would be fun to beat Craig in the individual race this year. Unfortunately Craig didn't enter so Dave won paddles down and received all the glory! Dave found the individual race more challenging in the mountain run but thinks that in many ways, it is easier to compete by yourself than as part of a team. Cramp was the only thing that spoiled his event but he managed to push on through the pain barrier. On several occasions during the event Dave accidentally blundered into a documentary being filmed of the event by Steve Gurney!

He trained harder than last year in the lead up to the event, made easier by being a stay-at-home dad. He doesn't think he'll be back next year as wife Andrea is expecting their second child (some blame the testosterone!) and life will be too busy for training but he has certainly given it a good go. Dave's



Dave tackles a hard uphill slog, but still manages a smile (or is that a grimace?).

results: overall placing 207, open men's placing 110, day 1 time 9:55:08, day 2 time 7:56:16, total time 17:51:24.

Murray Laird is the grand-daddy of the group and entered the family team event with his wife Jenny. The Lairds thought it would be a great thing to 'do together' now that the kids have flown the nest, but the only togetherness the event engendered was time talking about the race! They trained separately and competed separately, but now they share the achievement together.

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Murray entered because he felt that even though he had done half marathons before, you weren't a "man" till you had done something like this! He wanted to prove he had the endurance. Murray encountered a bit of bad luck with having to have his gear randomly checked (this means unpacking everything and showing the officials you have all the correct gear) and then gashing his face, requiring stitches to the cheek. Jenny wasn't too amused about wearing a blood stained bib at the change over!

Jenny calls herself the 'oldest bird' in the group and despite breaking the bank in the endeavor to get to the Coast to Coast, she's gleeful about the 10 kilos she lost getting there! Jenny's enormous smile of joy as she kayaks down the Waimakariri River sums up what the achievement meant to her. The camaraderie of fellow competitors is also an extraordinary feature of the competition and is one Jenny values. Murray and Jenny's results:

Jenny, keeps her head above water on the Waimakariri River.



overall placing 50, team placing 12 (150 other teams entered), day 1 time 6:10:54, day 2 time 7:45, total time 13:55:54.

Brenda CrummeY stumbled into the Coast to Coast by chance when she went to a Life Works course two years ago. The Life Works experience gave her the motivation to achieve some of her life-long ambitions. One such ambition was to learn to kayak and when she was able to afford it, Brenda did a training course. At training she met the Lairds and together they all made the commitment to doing the Coast to Coast and then they couldn't back out!

For Brenda it has been a life changing experience that has helped her achieve

personal goals and frankly she hasn't stopped smiling since! "It was indescribable," she said. Brenda's results: overall placing 159, women's placing 25, day 1 time 8:30:02, day 2 time 7:42:37, total time 16:12:39.

All four competitors want to thank their support crews: Dave – Andrea and her father, Murray and Jenny – Doug Hislop, Brenda – Al the Mechanic. Brenda specifically wanted to thank Shane Herbert of Law West, Ash Heydon, Dirk of Progressive Mortgages and her mum for all the babysitting she did. None of the competitors felt they could have done it without the support of others. What a tremendous effort they all put in and what fantastic results they achieved.

By Kim Ferens

A more relaxed Murray, Jenny, Dave and Brenda.



Murray thrashes about, looking for his pipe and slippers.

There must be easier ways to get a can of Speights, Brenda.

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Hi Fishos

Again, we have had a few good days and a few bad days throughout the last month. Surfcasters have not weighed in a great deal over the last two or three weeks but the kayakers seem to be nailing the fish, although they are not biggies. There seem to be a lot of snapper just out of the surfcasters reach!

The Sutherlands Sports January Tri Comp was quite good, with about 35 fish weighed in. I was fortunate enough to get a good trevally, and then some one else pulled out a big spotty shark a bit over 8 kg and beat me by 16 points – buggler!

The February Tri Comp report was also a bit poor. However, a few of our members gave it a whirl. Shane Dunlop caught the only fish for our club, but unfortunately it did not beat the winning 1.8 kg snapper caught by a New Plymouth Club Fishing Section member – this weight is holding the \$400 prize so far.

The Waitangi Weekend three-dayer was a bit dismal for the surfcasters, with Shane Dunlop the only surfcaster to weigh in anything again. New member Peter Florance got a few good snapper – the heaviest 3.1 kg up north – and won the kayak section for the day.

The next Fish Together we had was on 19 February, but unfortunately not a lot was caught..

March is a great time of the year to get out in the “nip” of the morning – this is the best time to catch fish.

January catch report

Surfcasters: 32 snapper, 5 kahawai, 1 trevally, 3 rays, 3 conga eel, 1 shark.

Kayakers: 1 snapper, 5 gurnard, 6 blue cod, 3 kahawai (kayakers are eligible to weigh in 3 fish/species per day if this seems a bit low).

January Fish of the Month

Surfcasting: Debbie E – 2.6 kg trevally.

Kayakers: Garry Harrison – 2.88 kg kahawai.

Tight lines

Debbie E



Finlay just a whistle away from success!

Enough Silverware to turn the Queen green.



It was my pleasure recently to catch up with Oakura teenage skiing sensation, Finlay Neeson on his brief return to the village before he again heads off to Whistler Mountain in Canada.

Finlay and his family are regular visitors to the Canadian winter, where Finlay hones his skiing skills. The Neesons first visited Canada on a house swap adventure three years ago and the whole family got to indulge their skiing passion. Finlay excelled at the sport so the whole family headed back to Canada for subsequent skiing holidays.

Over the last Christmas holidays Finlay racked up an impressive score card with an 11th and a 16th placing (out of 190 competitors) in the Giant Slalom race at Sun Peaks. Now he has his sights set firmly on a 10th or under placing at Whistler Mountain when he returns next month as a member of the New Zealand Junior Ski Team. He wants to improve his 38th place in the Giant Slalom and 28th in the Slalom.

It's a matter of nerves, he says, so hopefully all the practice and competitions over the past year have helped him get on top of the jitters. As mum Janis pointed out, “You wait around all morning to race and once your race has started, it's all over in one minute. Then you wait around all afternoon and race again, so there's plenty of time to get nervous.” The practice and preparation for that one minute run is huge and Finlay's commitment (not to mention his parents') to all that hard work is awesome.

While in Canada Finlay spends from 9am to 2pm training, then he does gym work with a roster of four days on and one day off. Following the gym work is two hours of ski tuning. And that involves two sets of skis – slalom skis and giant slalom skis. (Just think, at the same time we were all lounging on the beach!) He is quite proud of his technician skills now and can see a potential pocket money earner from his friends!

Back here at home the training doesn't stop for the teenager either. Last winter Finlay trained with the Turoa Race Team every weekend and he's notched up some good wins in New Zealand (two wins in the giant slalom and two seconds in the slalom, and winner of the North Island Primary Championship). He has also been selected to be in the 2006 New Zealand Olympics Identification Programme for possible future Olympians. And the Olympics are Finlay's big dream. He is a self-confessed speed junkie who loves the adrenaline buzz of going fast, so we may as well have him going fast for New Zealand! But in the mean time we just hope he does in Canada next month.

By Kim Ferens

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Silver and bronze for local Show Jumper



Oakura's Jen Blyde has recently returned from a "trip of a lifetime" to India where she was the manager of the Show Jumping team representing New Zealand at the CSI International Show Jumping Competition held at the Pune National Defence Academy. The team consisted of Tanya Dickey (Jen's daughter – Oakura), Georgina Davison (Blenheim), Jamie Campbell (Auckland). The team was selected by the Equestrian Federation and departed on a 19 hour plane journey to Mumbai on the 24 January. Competing at the event were teams from eight countries and the competitors and their managers were accommodated at the very comfortable and grand grounds of the National Defence Academy. The Academy is home to 2400 cadets who are training to be India's defence force. Jen said the Academy were extremely good hosts and everyone was treated like royalty. They got to mix with some of India's top dignitaries and even film stars. The horses for the teams were provided by the Academy and were allocated to competitors by ballot. Once this was done each rider was given 20 minutes and six jumps only to familiarize themselves with the horse. Tanya received a top horse called 'Master' and was given the instruction by the trainer to gallop him up to the jumps. She was also told by another Indian show jumper to take it easy which she did and was more in keeping with her own style of jumping. The team all performed well and won the silver medal for New Zealand, Tanya also performed well as an individual and won the bronze in the individual event.

The results were very good and especially sweet considering they were not rated as a medal threat being young and slight whilst at the Defence Academy it was believed that good show jumpers needed to be big and strong! And while the three girls received plenty of attention for their lovely personalities and good looks they stole the show with their horsemanship.

Jen was kept busy as manager organizing safety and health issues, gear, travel, finances and being team spokeswoman at the various functions (high teas, cocktail parties, dinners) they attended.

The whole competition was a wonderful experience and one that Jen would like to repeat given half the chance. A special thank you needs to go to the different organizations that sponsored the team – The Lion Foundation for \$1500 per team member and for Tanya personally, \$500 each from the TSB Community Trust and The Taranaki Show Jumping Group.

By Kim Ferens

Oakura Pony Club

Into the fray... Pony Club competition is now well up to speed.

The North Taranaki showjumping team recently returned from the North Island Showjumping Championships at Cambridge with mixed results, but very good individual performances from members. Riders were required to achieve a clear round to be able to progress to the jump-off rounds, which were timed and, because of the level of competition, also required a clear round. These events are the most exciting and nervous times for the team and supporters as they silently will the rails to stay put. Clear first rounds are greeted with great excitement and fanfare. Clear jump-off rounds result in joyous applause from the various groups of team supporters scattered around the arena. If the timing is good and a placing is the reward – great jubilation. So a very eventful two days were experienced at Cambridge.

In typical Cambridge style, Day One saw the thermometer at boiling point with horses and teams sweltering through the day, followed 12 hours later by steady rain, which saw the arena turf turn to a quagmire.

Our newly initiated junior riders from Okato Pony Club excelled in their first-time Cambridge experience, with some good clear rounds. The junior ring is the most fiercely competitive at this competition, requiring great skill from both rider and pony. Our intermediate riders also achieved some good clear rounds to proceed into the jump-offs. The pressure-cooker excitement and expectations in these rounds took their toll, with rails tumbling. Never mind. Just having a clear round was reason to celebrate. In the senior ring, the rails are lifted – they seem impossibly high. Clair Hinton and Sexy B unfortunately crashed the practice jumps before entering the ring and were forced to retire due to injury to both horse and rider. Lauren Rook and Jess seemed to revel in the conditions and managed placings in two of their four events, the last achieved in very wet and muddy conditions. So with points in short supply the team placed 23rd in a field of 40. A very good performance by all. Many thanks to the support crew. A great team effort.

The Taranaki Dressage team, who ventured off to the New Zealand Dressage Championships at Taupo, also achieved good results, despite only our two senior riders having experienced this competition before. The team finished 6th overall, in a field of 14 teams. Oakura Pony Club's perennial performing dressage rider Amber Parkes rode to a 7th placing in the North Island Championship and a 10th overall in New Zealand. Zac Bingham from Waitara Pony Club, who replaced local rider Samantha Everest at the 11th hour, finished 8th in the North Island Championship and 11th overall in New Zealand. A great effort from both riders. Another local rider, Zoe Laing, and New Plymouth rider Lauren Moorby achieved a 1st and 4th respectively in one of their events in the individual rider competition. OPC rider and newcomer to top level dressage, Catherine West, rode well, but missed out on a placing in a count-back of scores. Despite Catherine's limited experience at dressage at this level, she proved to be our top junior rider, which certainly bodes well for the future.

Taranaki Area Pony Club recently held trials for the Lower North Island Pony Club Games competition. OPC fielded a non-competitive team at the trials – resplendent in shocking pink helmet covers and saddle blankets. Of the eight teams entered, OPC finished a creditable fourth against the more fancied and well-drilled Waitara and Eltham games teams. We topped the day off by winning the parade cup for best formation and trot-up performance. A very good effort.

Graham Rook

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GETTING WET!



Oakura Boardriders – SURFING UPDATE

The competition season set off to a busy start, with contests every weekend for the first three months of the year for those who are keen.

It kicked off with the Surfing Nationals. This is New Zealand's premier surfing event – with over 300 competitors and eight days of competition to get through, it takes dedication to make the effort. Held in the Far North this year from 7-15 January, it was based at Ahipara, a small village on the West Coast at the base of Ninety Mile Beach (12 km out of Kaitia for those who have never been to the area).

Taranaki had a good contingent this year, and Oakura contributed its share. The weather was as great as Northland can be, with great surf for the duration. Ahipara's fabled Shipwreck Bay points gave three days of exceptional conditions and the remainder of the contest was run at the Bluff, 62 km up Ninety Mile Beach. The week involved a lot of driving – a 4WD was a definite advantage, but even so the week proved hard on competitors and vehicles, with the sheer logistics of it all taking a toll.

Oakura Boardriders' competitors fared well. Paige Hareb won the Under 16 girls' title and came 2nd in both the Under 18 and the Open women's divisions. Tyler Anderson was 4th in the Under 18 longboarding, Keone Campbell came 3rd in the Under 16 boys' and Nat Day got through a few rounds of the very competitive Open division. Other Taranaki competitors to do well were Jared Hancox (semi finalist), Blanton Smith (finalist) and Seth Matthews, who won the over 45s and came 2nd in the over 40s.

The weekend of 21-22 January saw a Billabong Gromsearch competition at Mt Maunganui. The best surf was on the high tide on Sunday, with a few lucky enough to have 2-3 ft waves. Otherwise it was 1-2 ft low-tide beach break surf, which is unfortunately what the contests on the East Coast seem to dish up far too often. Nevertheless, we had some good results: Paige Hareb – 1st Under 16 women's, Keone Campbell – 2nd Under 16 men's, and Tyler Anderson was beaten by conditions in the finals by 0.2 of a point. Casey Stevens made a comeback to

competition in the Under 16 and Under 14 girls' and Connor Anderson was also beaten by conditions in the Under 14 boys' finals. Other Taranaki surfers competing were Mathis Smith (4th in Under 16's) and Mark Parthmore (semi-finalist, Under 14's).

Whangamata had a Lion Red contest on the same weekend, then the following weekend another Gromsearch contest, unfortunately in the same tiny surf conditions. Oakura surfers to do well were Paige Hareb, taking out the Under 16 girls', Lucy Brankin taking out the Under 12 girls' and Tyler Anderson, who made it to the finals in the Under 16 boys'.

The last of the Lion Red Super Sixteen series, the Rip Curl Raglan Pro, was held on the weekend of 10-12 February. This had open divisions and Under 19 divisions and was also the last chance for juniors to impress selectors for the New Zealand team to the World Juniors contest, to be held in Brazil later in the year. There were still a few spots in the boys' division open and Tyler Anderson and Keone Campbell were asked to attend – Tyler made the most of his chance to impress with the highest heat score of the juniors' round one in good surf at Manu Bay.

Unfortunately the surf deteriorated and the second day was held in small surf at the local beach, which put paid to many competitors' hopes. It did not stop Paige Hareb though! Paige went on to win the women's open and the finals of the Rip Curl Gromsearch grand final, winning an air ticket to compete at Bells Beach in Victoria later in the year.

Paige also fit in a showing at the Roxy Pro Junior at Philip Island in Australia in late January, coming in second in the prestigious pro junior division and placing highly in all the other divisions she entered. The future is very bright for Paige and we all wish her the best of luck in her pursuit of more titles across the Tasman.

Brent Anderson

Oakura
Boardriders



Paige Hareb autographs a top for a fan.

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BOARDRIDERS' UPCOMING EVENTS

- Weekend of 25-26 March – Club Champs.
- Friday 24 March – Registration night at the club rooms, open to all members (new members are welcome – for details call Paul Christophers on 752 7126).
- Saturday 25 March – 'The Boardy Boys' play at the club in the evening. Everyone is welcome so come and party the night away.

I REMEMBER WHEN . . .

SURFIN' IN THE SIXTIES

Background photo - Merv and Neil Guthrie.

You can't help but wonder how idyllic surfing would have been in the Sixties and early Seventies when the sport was still but a pup in Taranaki. One person who knows how idyllic it was is Merv Moses of Omata – idyllic because not only could you have a wave to yourself, you could nearly have the beach to yourself.

Surfing began for Merv when he was a teenager living near Fitzroy Beach and it was the "answer" and possible lifesaver for a bored young man. Surfing provided a family of sorts – being out on the waves with your mates was everything. Merv remembers buying a car with four of his mates for \$10 each. They would load up the roof-rack with boards and the backseat with girls and head off around the coast surfing – the Kumara Patch, Stent Road and even further afield.

Surfing was also a good escape from the very real and scary conscription laws of the times. Every 19-year-old like Merv was eligible to be conscripted to fight in the Vietnam War – your birth date could be pulled out of the hat at any time and Merv's generation was not interested in war and fighting so it was easy to go out on the waves and avoid the postman.

To understand surfing 35 years ago is to envisage a young Merv wearing one of the first models of wetsuits to be worn for surfing or, as was more common, a woollen freezing works singlet and board shorts – summer and winter, on a board 9-foot long with a large fin, no leg rope. They used board wax that was specially brought into the country and sold at garages or, if they couldn't get that, used household candles. After surfing they'd hide their surfboards in the lupins at Fitzroy Beach, and collect mussels from the rocks at Waiwakaiho on the way back to cook up for a feed. A beach with a 'crowd' had around six surfers.

Surfers today will never know the thrill of being the only

ones on a break and while surfing gear has changed dramatically, the ability to get away from other people has long gone. The ultimate surfing experience for Merv was such an occasion. Picture Stent Road of the early Seventies, going in the surf at high tide with a mate, Terry Bailey, surfing till the following high tide (8 hours!) and nobody else coming to the same spot in that time!

In 1972 the *Daily News* published a story on the emergence of surfing and the 19-year-old Merv is quoted as saying on the danger of surfing "...you get tossed off often enough... But if the sea is at all tricky the thing to remember is that you're worth more than your board... I've been scared a few times by the size of waves I've taken on, but usually I try to surf up to my ability and no more. That way, the danger in surfing is no greater than a dozen other sports New Zealander's take part in every week." And he has the scars to prove his sport was dangerous plus he lost more than one board to the sea.

Surfies in the Sixties and Seventies were called "Lemon heads" by that other band of sports enthusiasts, the rugby players. These two rival groups would meet at the regular cabaret evenings and partake in the infamous food fights, usually firing boiled potatoes at their opponents. It wasn't considered a good night if a food fight hadn't taken place! In the end the board riders found it difficult to hire a venue for their cabarets.

But there was another side to Merv's surfing and that was photography. Merv was one of the first surf photographers in Taranaki. Underwater cameras were unheard of so the young apprentice mechanic built his own. He made a waterproof box into which he placed his 35mm camera. He was then able to take photos out on the water and not just from the shore. If you have ever tried taking photos of surfers, you'll know it is very difficult and to do so with a box contraption is extraordinary. Merv set up a dark room in the pantry and developed his own photos – black and white of course, colour being too expensive. It wasn't a money making venture but he did get paid \$100 by the *New Zealand Herald* once for a photo of Tom Smithers on top of a wave. The suitcase of photos he still has is a unique glimpse at the life and times of a "Lemon head" and now all those middle aged men have is a shutter's worth of youth, health and good times.

By Kim Ferens

Rob Wright - sheer poetry.



Pondering upon the surf conditions, Rocky, Robbie and Wags.

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Athletics has proved very popular again this summer. On Monday nights at Corbett Park, children participate in various sporting activities such as running races, high jump and ball skills.



Mini-Athletics 2005/6

We have come to end of our second season of Mini-Athletics. Once again it has been extremely well supported with as many as 50 children turning up each week. Our support has not only come from Oakura residents but from Omata and Spotswood as well.

This season we opened up the age groups to include 8-year-olds. This has proved a challenge as these children have developed very good skills and are ready for competition. We hope they continue and head into Woodleigh Athletics later in the year.

We are very lucky to have a strong community base. Before the beginning of next season we will be offering some training for parents in facilitating games and activities, through Sport Taranaki. We'll keep you up to date on this through the *TOM*, the Oakura School newsletter and the noticeboard outside the Four Square. It is only with this training that we can continue to offer a high level of instruction for the children. We do need more session volunteers to keep up with the increasing numbers of participants.

We are lucky here in Oakura to have a great facility like Corbett Park at which to run our activities. We have been able to utilise the natural resources it has to offer each week. The hill on the northern side provides a great place to roll down and run back up for the children. The beach has been our sandpit for long jump. On the hot nights a dip in the river has certainly been welcome after a strenuous 45 minutes of running, jumping and throwing.

Our new barbecue has seen some hard use. The money we raise from selling sausages each week has enabled us to purchase equipment.

Lastly a big thank you to our sponsors, Richmond Meats and the Oakura Four Square, and to Rodney Hall for making our storage container.

Our season will commence again in November 2006.

The Mini Athletics Committee

Rose Parker, Melissa Waite and Jo Hill

Oakura Playcentre

At the Oakura Playcentre there is so much opportunity for children to PLAY and have FUN – everyone is happy to be back after the long summer break.

The Playcentre in Donnelly Street is open Monday and Wednesday, 9am to noon. New families are always welcome and the first three sessions are free. After that the fees are just \$15 per term for one child or \$20 for more than one child. The Playcentre is licensed for children from 0–6 years.

At each session children have a huge range of play equipment and activities to choose from including painting, collage, carpentry, musical instruments, dolls, play dough, baking, blocks, puzzles, puppets, books, water play, the sandpit and obstacle course to name just a few. The Playcentre is very well resourced with play equipment and it is all good quality.

With the good weather we have been enjoying, the children have loved playing outside and we plan to encourage them to expend even more of their boundless energy this term with lots of outdoor games. Having been inspired by Kaitake Kindergarten's success with its Healthy Foods policy, we also plan to introduce our own policy this term with activities around this theme.

If you are interested in joining us at the Playcentre, feel free to just turn up to a session or phone Jamie Silk on 752 1000 for more information

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OAKURA school news

Beach Education

During the first two weeks back at school all our classes had the opportunity to be involved in a programme called Beach Education. This was run by Surf Life Saving Taranaki and sponsored by Genesis Energy. Each class had a turn at spending the day at the Oakura Surf Club, having a tour of the clubrooms and equipment shed, and going up into the lookout tower. They watched a couple of videos on water safety and the dangers that may occur while swimming in the sea. The children learned the five surf-sense rules and sunsmart tips like slip-slop-slap and wrap.

I went with Rooms 1 and 2 and was very impressed at how well behaved all the children were and how they all listened attentively and asked lots of questions. The children had loads of fun participating in the organised games throughout the day and especially enjoyed the water activities, which were supervised by the watchful eyes of the many parent helpers. A great day was had by all.

Sharlene Walker



5 year old Jakob Farrant from Room 2, tries on some of the lifesaving gear.

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Oakura Plunket

The local Oakura Plunket Committee organises the regular coffee mornings on Fridays at the St James Church Hall on the main road in Oakura. These start at am and go until about 10.30am, with lots of toys for the children and a cuppa, cake and a chat for the parents.

The new term is well underway so come along on Fridays with your littlies. We always welcome new faces and it will be great to catch up with our regulars too.

For more information, contact me on 752 7034.

Until next time.

Catherine Keenan

Oakura Plunket Committee

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OMATA school news



Picnicking at Brooklands.



I have never seen children so ready to come back to school! We have all had a good break and we were fortunate to have missed that really muggy hot week at the beginning of February.

The year got off to a flying start with a wonderful picnic day at Brooklands Park. Warm weather has meant the pool and the bush are getting plenty of use.

This term some of our highlights will be: an overnight camp at school for the senior syndicate classes, a visit to Oakura Marae, Puke Ariki visits and our swimming display day. We welcome our new families and we look forward to everyone coming along to these events and to our parent-teacher interviews.

We congratulate one of our senior students, Dylan Deane (12), who was runner-up in the 16 and under category at the NZ Speedway North Island Championships. It takes a great deal of skill, dedication and courage to achieve at this level of competition. Well done Dylan!

This is our first year since 1969 with both Year 7 and 8 students. We have a class of 25, located in our new Room 6 classroom, which is proving to be a wonderful teaching space. We are looking forward to the leadership and mature outlook that senior students of this age group bring to a school. One of the special qualities of Year 8 students is that they tend to look for ways of giving something back to the school at which they have spent their formative years.

Karen and Pat



Maisie and Katie just "dig" Omata School.

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tom kids

FACTS
POEMS
JOKE

TOM KID PROFILE



Name: Maeghan King
Age: 7 years.
School: Orwira
Teacher: Mrs Barleyman

Favourite ...

Food: Lollies and oranges

Activity: Riding my pony

Game: Netball

Movie: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

My pets: Henry and Charlie (the cats), my pony Andie

Exciting place I've been recently: The rollercoaster at the Gold Coast, Australia

When I grow up I want to be ... a teacher.

Teacher: If I bought 100 current buns for a dollar, what would each bun be?
 Pupil: At that price, probably stale!

Teacher: If I give you two rabbits and two rabbits and another two rabbits, how many rabbits have you got?
Katie: Seven!
Teacher: No, listen carefully again. If I give you two rabbits and two rabbits and another two rabbits, how many rabbits have you got?
Katie: Seven!
Teacher: Let's try this another way. If I give you two apples and two apples and another two apples, how many apples have you got?
Katie: Six!
Teacher: Good. Now if I give you two rabbits and two rabbits and another two rabbits, how many rabbits have you got?
Katie: Seven!
Teacher: How on earth do you work out that three lots of two rabbits make seven?
Katie: I've already got one rabbit at home!

CLUBS AND GROUPS CALENDER

- Plunket coffee Mornings:**
Friday mornings 9.00 -10.30am at St James Church hall.
- Mini Groovers:**
Tuesday mornings 10.00am at Oakura Hall.
Gold coin donation.
- St John's Omata:**
Morning worship 10am 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.
- St James Church Oakura:**
Morning worship 10am 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.
- Kung Fu:**
Thursdays 6-7.30pm for 12 years and over.
454 Plymouth Rd, phone Joanna Smith-Holley 752 1016.
- Kick Boxing & Self Defence:**
Mondays 6-7.30pm, for 12 yrs and over.
454 Plymouth Rd, phone Joanna Smith-Holley 752 1016.
- JKA Karate**
Tuesdays at Oakura Hall 5.30-6.30pm.
Thursdays at Oakura Hall 6.00-7.00pm.
Contact Jim Hoskin 752 7337.
- Yoga:**
Tuesdays at Oakura Hall 7-8.30pm.
Thursdays at Oakura Hall 7.30-9pm.
Contact Sarsha 027 635 9494
- Oakura Art Group**
Tuesdays 9.45am to 12 noon, February to late November
St James Church Hall.
Contact Pat Smith on 752 7515.
- Senior Citizens:**
Meet Tuesdays in St James Church lounge for cards and bowls. All welcome, phone 752 7864 for enquiries.
- Twilight Bowls:**
Thursdays 5pm at the Oakura Bowling and Social Club.
All Welcome.
- Indoor Bowls:**
Mondays 7.30pm at Oakura Hall. Rex Ward 752 7849.

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Properties for Sale by Anne



3 Rahui View, Oakura

4 bdrms + study on large 1706m² section with lovely rural views. Huge living areas. Sunny with great outdoor living options.



25 Arden Place, Oakura

Low maintenance, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, internal access double garage, sea views, close to main patrolled beach.



251 Tukapa St

4 bedroom bungalow. Fantastic, private 932m² section with potential to subdivide. Frankley School zone.



8A Arden Place, Oakura

The ultimate rustic beach bach. 3 bdrms with deck looking straight down to the sea.



219 Tukapa St

Grand 1884 villa. Sunny, with 3 huge bedrooms. Large family/dining and lounge areas, fully fenced with double garage.



118A Wairau Rd, Oakura

4 bdrm + ensuite, low maintenance brick home on private 2,200m² section.



17 Kinross Drive, NP

Large 4 bedroom + study home, 3 bathrooms, 2 living areas, private back yard.



204 Surrey Hill Rd, Oakura

Near New, 5 bdrms + study on 6010m² of land. Call Anne for pricing.



48 Karina Rd

Character bungalow on popular Karina. Tucked away with lovely potager gdns. Cedar clad home with 3 bdrms, lge sunny deck and dbl gge. Close to Mangorei School.

Wairau Road Sections

From 990m² to 1700m². Most are flat, some flat and sloping.

Thought for the Month

"Don't let the fear stop you. Go face the challenge then let the fear decide for you"

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